

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending in the above application. By the above amendment, claims 13-18 have been added. Claims 2-9 have been withdrawn from consideration.

The Office Action dated July 19, 2007, has been received and carefully reviewed. Each issue raised in that Office Action is addressed below, and reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and following remarks.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2000-297823, hereinafter "Kamikawa." Claim 1, as amended, recites a yoke-and-shaft coupling structure that includes, inter alia, a yoke having a shaft coupling portion and a shaft to be inserted into inside of the shaft coupling portion, wherein the shaft coupling portion includes one of a fixed projecting portion and a recessed portion for positioning the shaft in an axial direction in both directions along an axis of the shaft, the recessed portion being perpendicular to the axial direction. Kamikawa discloses a recess 10 that is not perpendicular to the axis of the inserted shaft. Kamikawa does not show at least this aspect of the claimed invention, and claim 1 as amended is submitted to be allowable over Kamikawa for at least this reason.

Claims 13, 14, 17 and 18 depend from claim 1 and are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Claim 13 further distinguishes over Kamikawa by reciting that the recessed portion comprises a slot having a centerline perpendicular to the axial direction, an arrangement not shown or suggested by Kamikawa. Claim 14 recites that the recessed portion comprises a slot having first and second parallel sidewalls that are perpendicular to the axial direction.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kamikawa. Claim 10 as amended recites a yoke-and-shaft coupling structure comprising, inter alia, a yoke having a shaft coupling portion and a shaft, wherein the shaft coupling portion includes one of a fixed projecting portion and a recessed slot for positioning the shaft in both directions along the axis of the shaft. Moreover, the recessed slot has first and second spaced walls, and the shaft includes

one of a groove portion for receiving the projecting portion and a salient portion insertable into the recessed slot. The fixed projecting portion in the groove portion or the salient portion in the recessed slot limits relative axial movement between the yoke and all parts of the shaft in the U-shaped end portion of the yoke, prevents the shaft from being removed from the yoke by an axial force and allows the shaft to be removed from the yoke by a force perpendicular to the axis of the shaft. An axial force would remove Kamikawa's shaft from the yoke. Claim 10 as amended is submitted to be allowable over Kamikawa for at least this reason.

Claim 15 depends from claim 10 and is submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 10. Claim 15 further recites that the slot of claim 10 is perpendicular to the axis of the shaft when the shaft is mounted in the yoke. Kamikawa does not disclose such a structure and further distinguishes over Kamikawa for this reason.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kamikawa. Claim 11 recites yoke-and-shaft coupling structure that includes, inter alia, a yoke including a shaft coupling portion and a shaft having a longitudinal axis. The shaft coupling portion includes a planar wall one of a fixed projecting portion projecting therefrom and a recessed slot recessed therein for positioning the shaft in both directions along the axis of the shaft, and the shaft includes one of a groove portion and a salient portion insertable into the recessed slot. Claim 11 further recites that either the fixed projecting portion cooperates with the groove portion or the salient portion cooperates with the recessed slot to both limit axial movement of the shaft into the yoke and to prevent the shaft from being removed from the yoke by an axial force. Kamikawa includes a sloped wall that will allow a shaft to be withdrawn by an axial force, contrary to the requirements of amended claim 11. Claim 11 is submitted to be allowable over Kamikawa for at least this reason.

Claims 12 and 16 depend from claim 11 and are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 11.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McClanahan. Claim 1 as amended, recites a yoke-and-shaft coupling structure comprising, inter alia, a yoke

and a shaft, wherein the shaft coupling portion includes one of a fixed projecting portion and a recessed portion perpendicular to the axial direction for positioning the shaft in an axial direction in both directions along an axis of the shaft. The Office Action continues to interpret the flat portion of McClanahan's wall between protrusions 68 and 70 as a "recessed portion." It is respectfully submitted that this interpretation is inconsistent with the common meaning of "recess." The Office Action objected to the lack of evidence regarding the meaning of "recess." Therefore, enclosed herewith are copies of two dictionary definitions of the word "recess." The first, from The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (www.m-w.com) provides that a recess is an "indentation, cleft" or an "alcove." The second definition, from The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition, 2000 (www.bartleby.com) similarly provides that a recess is "an indentation of small hollow" or "an alcove." A flat area surrounding two projections on a wall is not a recess under any of these meanings. If the examiner maintains that the flat area between projections 68 and 70 is a recess, it is respectfully requested that authority citing such an interpretation be cited.

Claim 1 as amended further recites that the recess is perpendicular to the axial direction. It is respectfully submitted that McClanahan's region between projections 68 and 70 is not perpendicular to the axis of a shaft. If anything, the wall appears to be parallel to the axis of shaft 16. Claim 1 is submitted to further distinguish over McClanahan for this reason.

Claim 13, 14, 17 and 18 depend from claim 1 and are submitted to be allowable over McClanahan for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Claim 13 further defines the recessed portion as a slot having a centerline perpendicular to the axial direction. McClanahan does not show a slot, much less a slot having a centerline perpendicular to an axial direction. Claim 14 further defines the recessed portion as a slot having first and second parallel sidewalls which is also not shown in McClanahan. Claim 17 indicates that the shaft coupling portion comprises a planar wall have one of a projection projecting therefrom or a recess recessed therein. Even if the gap between McClanahan's projections 68 and 70 is called a "recess," McClanahan in no manner shows a wall with a recess recessed therein. Claims 13, 14 and 17 further distinguish over McClanahan for these reasons.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McClanahan.

Claim 10 recites a yoke-and-shaft coupling structure that includes, inter alia, a yoke having a coupling portion and a shaft wherein the shaft coupling portion includes one of a fixed projecting portion and a recessed slot for positioning the shaft in both directions along the axis of the shaft, the recessed slot having first and second spaced walls. Claim 10 further recites the shaft includes one of a groove portion for receiving the projecting portion and a salient portion insertable into the recessed slot. Claim 10 further recites that the fixed projecting portion in the groove portion or the salient portion in the recessed slot limits relative axial movement between the yoke and all parts of the shaft in the U-shaped end portion of the yoke, prevents the shaft from being removed from the yoke by an axial force and allows the shaft to be removed from the yoke by a force perpendicular to the axis of the shaft. Before McClanahan's projections 70 are formed, the shaft 16 can be removed from the yoke by an axial force. After McClanahan's projections 70 are formed, the shaft cannot be removed from the yoke by a force perpendicular to the axis of the shaft. Claim 10 as amended is submitted to be allowable over McClanahan for at least these reasons.

Claim 15 depends from claim 10 and is submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 10.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McClanahan. Claim 11 as amended recites a yoke-and-shaft coupling structure that includes, inter alia, a yoke having a shaft coupling portion and a shaft having a longitudinal axis. Claim 11 recites that the shaft coupling portion includes a planar wall having one of a fixed projecting portion projecting therefrom and a recessed slot recessed therein for positioning the shaft in both directions along the axis of the shaft, and that the shaft includes one of a groove portion and a salient portion insertable into the recessed slot. Claim 11 further recites that either the fixed projecting portion cooperates with the groove portion or the salient portion cooperates with the recessed slot to both limit axial movement of the shaft into the yoke and to prevent the shaft from being removed from the yoke by an axial force. McClanahan does not disclose a planar wall having a recess or a recessed slot under any conventional interpretation of these terms. Claim 11 is submitted to be allowable over McClanahan for at least this reason.

Claims 12 and 16 depend from claim 11 and are submitted to be allowable for at least the

same reasons as claim 11. Claim 16 further distinguishes over McClanahan by reciting that either the fixed projecting portion cooperates with the groove portion or the salient portion cooperates with the recessed slot to permit the shaft to be removed from the yoke by a force perpendicular to the axis of the shaft. Projections 70 prevent McClanahan's shaft from being removed from the yoke in a direction perpendicular to the shaft axis, and claim 16 further distinguishes over McClanahan for this reason.

CONCLUSION


Each issue raised in the Office Action dated July 19, 2007, has been addressed, and it is believed that claims 1-18 are in condition for allowance. Wherefore, reconsideration and allowance of these claims is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the examiner is respectfully requested to contact Scott Wakeman (Reg. No. 37,750) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: October 19, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

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The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language: Fourth Edition. 2000.

recess

SYLLABICATION: re·cess

PRONUNCIATION: *rē'sēs', rĭ-sēs'*

NOUN: **1a.** A temporary cessation of the customary activities of an engagement, occupation, or pursuit. **b.** The period of such cessation. See synonyms at **pause**. **2.** A remote, secret, or secluded place. Often used in the plural. **3a.** An indentation or small hollow. **b.** An alcove.

VERB: Inflected forms: **re·cessed**, **re·cess·ing**, **re·cess·es**

TRANSITIVE VERB: **1.** To place in a recess. **2.** To create or fashion a recess in: *recessed a portion of the wall*. **3.** To suspend for a recess: *The committee chair recessed the hearings*.

INTRANSITIVE VERB: To take a recess: *The investigators recessed for lunch*.

ETYMOLOGY: Latin *recessus*, retreat, from past participle of *recēdere*, to recede. See **recede¹**.

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recess

2 entries found.

recess[1,noun]

recess[2,verb]

Main Entry: **'re·cess**

Pronunciation: \ 'rē-,ses, ri- '\

Function: *noun*

Etymology: Latin *recessus*, from *recedere* to recede

Date: 1531

1 : the action of receding : **RECESSION**

2 : a hidden, secret, or secluded place or part

3 a : **INDENTATION, CLEFT** <a deep *recess* in the hill> **b** : **ALCOVE** <a *recess* lined with books>

4 : a suspension of business or procedure often for rest or relaxation <children playing at *recess*>

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